

It is natural, argues Macaulay, that William III should not believe the charges which were circulated by these writers against the Master of Stair about the massacre of Glencoe.

We can hardly suppose that he was much in the habit of reading Jacobite pamphlets ; and, if he did read them, he would have found in them such a quantity of absurd and rancorous invective against himself that he would have been very little inclined to credit any imputation which they might throw on his servants. He would have seen himself accused, in one tract, of being a concealed Papist, in another of having poisoned Jeffreys in the Tower, in a third of having contrived to have Talmash taken off at Brest. He would have seen it asserted that, in Ireland, he once ordered fifty of his wounded English soldiers to be burned alive. He would have seen that the unalterable affection which he felt from his boyhood to his death for three or four of the bravest and most trusty friends that ever prince had the happiness to possess was made a ground for imputing to him abominations as foul as those which are buried under the waters of the Dead Sea. He might naturally be slow to believe frightful imputations thrown by writers whom he knew to be habitual liars on a statesman whose abilities he valued highly, and to whose exertions he had, on some great occasions, owed much.¹

While the evidence of the Jacobite pamphleteers is dismissed as unworthy of belief when they make statements

against William, and William was justified in
rejecting it
when they made charges against the Master
of Stair,
Macaulay invites his readers to accept it when
they make
certain statements against Marlborough.
Speaking of the
campaign in Flanders in 1689 and of
Marlborough's
victory at Walcourt he says :

The Jacobites however discovered in the
events of the
campaign abundant matter for invective.
Marlborough

¹ V, 2513 (xxi).